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The Files

December 8, 1949

EE - Mr. Johnson

STATE - D

Subj: CUKORS, Herbert

Mr. Visson, correspondent in Washington of Time magazine, called me this morning to inquire if I might give him some background information on Mr. Cukors.

I informed Mr. Visson that this name was not familiar to me and, after making a check with BI and SY, I further informed him that the Department appeared to have no information on this person.

Mr. Visson then explained his interest, as follows. He stated that one of Time correspondents in Brazil had informed him that Mr. Cukors is an unpunished war criminal who is now living and operating a small business in Brazil. Mr. Cukors is stated to be a Latvian who, during the German occupation of Riga, acted on behalf of the Nazis as chief executioner in the Riga Ghetto.

Mr. Visson further informed me that his "Latvian diplomatic friends in Washington" had shed no particular light on this aspect of Mr. Cukors' activities but that they had identified him as a well known resident of pre-war Riga. They stated that his name was frequently in the news in connection with unusual events such as hand constructing and flying his own plane, etc.

Mr. Visson said he thought this would make an interesting story. Although he did not so state, I got the impression that the motive of the story would be to expose the escape from justice of an alleged war criminal.

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BI
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American Embassy, Rio de Janeiro

EUR:EE:VJohnson:ba

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